

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A communication system that transmits electronic mail among multiple sender and recipient terminals and which both uses and augments the Internet, comprising:

a postal server and postal server software,
links connecting the sender and recipient terminals and said postal server
and postal server software to the Internet, and

sender software operable on at least the sender terminal that selectively connects the sender terminal to the postal server via the internet and said sender link,

said postal server software providing premium mail services, and said sender terminal and software providing a selection of said premium services to be performed with respect to the transmitted electronic mail.

2. (currently amended) A communications system according to claim 1 further comprising recipient software operable at least on said recipient terminal that processes said mail received from said postal server and postal server software via the internet and said recipient link.

3. (original) The communication system according to claim 2 wherein at least one of said sender and recipient software is application software stored at said sender and recipient terminals.

4. (original) The communication system according to claim 3 wherein the Internet has email application software and operates on the multiple sender and receiver terminals, said sender and receiver software is operable within said email application software.

5. (original) The communication system according to claim 2 wherein at least one of said sender and recipient software is stored and accessible to the sender and/or recipient at said postal server.

6. (original) The communication system according to claim 2 wherein said links comprise a network interconnecting said multiple said terminals to the Internet, at least one of said sender, recipient and postal software is stored and/or accessible to the sender and/or recipient at said network.

7. (currently amended) The communication system according to claim 1 further comprising payment software operable by at least said sender terminal and software and said postal server and postal server software to authorize and account for payment for use of said postal server and software.

8. (original) The communication system according to claim 7 wherein said payment software accounts for incentive credits for a recipient terminal in response to opening of selected electronic mail at said recipient terminal.

9. (currently amended) The communication system according to claim 7 wherein said payment software collects an additional fee in response to the sender software selection of optional services of said postal server and postal server software.

10. (original) The communication system according to claim 1 wherein said connecting links between the internet and any of said sender terminal, recipient terminal, and postal server includes a telecommunications link.

11. (Original) The communication system according to claim 1 wherein said connecting links between the internet and any of said sender terminal, recipient terminal, and postal server includes a link selected from the group consisting of: ISP, intranet, extranet, LAN, dial up, DSL, cable, satellite, cell, wireless, physical delivery and combinations thereof.

12. (currently amended) The communication system according to claim 1 wherein said ~~[[at]] premium services~~services are is-selected from the group consisting of: identification of said sender; certification of the identity of the entity operating said sender terminal; prioritization of sent and received mail; screening of mail for technical risks; screening of mail for content risks; encryption of mail; notification to sender of receipt of mail; notification to sender of opening of mail; pre-paid replies for recipient to respond to sender through the postal server; hard copy delivery of mail; customized incentives for recipients to open mail; verifiable date and time stamp of postal server processing; customized verification of decrypted content; creation of a holding of mail at said postal server; and payment and accounting for mail services; and combinations thereof.

13. (currently amended) The communication system according to claim 12 where said prioritization is a differentiation between mail processed by said postal server and postal server software and other electronic mail carried in the Internet.

14. (currently amended) The communication system according to claim 12 wherein said prioritization comprises a differentiation among mail processed by said postal server and postal server software.

15. (original) The communications system according to claim 1 wherein said sender and recipient terminals and the Internet can have different combinations of

operating systems and Internet software, and wherein the senders and recipients software are adapted to interface across said different combinations through the postal server.

16.(original) A method of communication for electronic mail among multiple sender and receiver terminals that both uses and augments the Internet, comprising:

linking the sender and receiver terminals to the Internet, and

selection by the sender of communications with the recipient using an electronic postal service.

17.(original) The method of claim 16 further comprising:

interaction by the recipient with said electronic postal service in response to said selection or email communication by the sender.

18.(original) The method of claim 17 where said linking includes telecommunicating.

19.(original) The method of claim 17 wherein said linking includes networking multiple ones of the sender or recipient terminals.

20.(original) The method of claim 17 wherein said selective postal services include payment and accounting services for at least a portion of said premium postal services.

21. (original) The method of claim 20 wherein said payment and accounting services provide incentives to a user of the recipient terminal for said interacting.